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1 - Original
1 - Yellow
1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Handley
1 - Liaison
1 - Mr. Bartlett

December 2, 1963

PROTECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

The degree of security that can be afforded the President of the United States is dependent to a considerable extent upon the degree of contact with the general public desired by the President. Absolute security is neither practical nor possible. An approach to complete security would require the President to operate in a sort of vacuum, isolated from the general public and behind impregnable barriers. His travel would be in secret; his public appearances would be behind bulletproof glass.

A more practical approach necessitates compromise. Any travel, any contact with the general public, involves a calculated risk on the part of the President and the men responsible for his protection. Such risks can be lessened when the President recognizes the security problem, has confidence in the dedicated Secret Service men who are ready to lay down their lives for him and accepts the necessary security precautions which they recommend. Many Presidents have been understandably impatient with the security precautions which many years of experience dictate because these precautions reduce the President's privacy and the access to him of the people of the country. Nevertheless, the procedures and advice should be accepted if the President wishes to have any security.

In addition to the measures now in force, consideration might be given to the following suggestions designed to improve the security of the President.

Travel:

1. Advise the Secret Service as far in advance as possible of travel plans and proposed itinerary.

2. Avoid publicizing exact routes of travel as long as possible.

3. Use specially armored cars with bulletproof glass and have such cars readily available in locations frequently visited.

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(see note page 3)

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4. Avoid setting a specific pattern of travel or other activity, such as visiting the same church at the same time each Sunday.

Public Appearances:

1. Use maximum feasible screening of persons in attendance, including use of detection devices sensitive to the amount of metal required in a firearm or grenade.

2. Use a bulletproof shield in front of the entire rostrum in public appearances such as the swearing in ceremony at the Capitol, the Presidential reviewing stand in front of the White House on Inauguration Days, and on the rear of trains.

3. Keep to a minimum the President's movements within crowds. Remain on the rostrum after public addresses, rather than mingling with the audience.

4. In appearances at public sporting events, such as football games, remain in one place rather than changing sides during the halftime ceremonies.

5. Limit public appearances by use of television whenever possible.

6. Avoid walking in public except when absolutely necessary.

Legislation:

1. Add the President and the Vice President to the list of Federal Officers set out in Section 1114, Title 18, United States Code, assaults upon whom are punishable under Federal law.

2. Furnish the Secret Service improved authority to request assistance and cooperation from other United States agencies, including the military, particularly in connection with foreign travel.

PROTECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

3. Improve control of the sale of firearms, requiring, as a minimum, registration of every firearm sold, together with adequate identification of the purchaser.

4. Ban picketing in the vicinity of the White House, as is now done at the United States Capitol and Supreme Court.

NOTE:

See memorandum Brennan to Sullivan dated 12/1/63, same caption, OHB:bmf.